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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Immigrant rights march marks L.A. event on 'Our History'

Meeting promotes book by Chinese-Cuban generals

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'Legalize all immigrants!'

Demand 25,000 demonstrators in New York

Actions for immigrant rights continue across U.S.



AP/Frank Franklin

More than 25,000 immigrant workers and supporters rally April 1 in Manhattan's Federal Plaza after marching over the Brooklyn Bridge. Signs say, "Legalize all immigrants."

BY MICHAEL ORTEGA AND MICHAEL ITALIE

NEW YORK—"We're here, we're not leaving, and if you kick us out, we will come back!" protesters chanted here April 1 as they marched across the Brooklyn Bridge. About 25,000 people, mostly Latin American–born workers, took part in the demonstration, which poured into Foley Square in lower Manhattan.

It was one of a series of protests around the country against HR 4437, known as the Sensenbrenner bill, passed by the House of Representatives last December. The bill makes it a felony to be in the United States without proper documents or to aid undocumented immigrants.

"We are workers, not criminals" was often chanted along the march route and appeared on many preprinted and hand-written signs.

"All the laws make things difficult for the undocumented," said Luis Yumbla of the 9-11 Latin American Workers Committee. Yumbla, originally from Ecuador, said he lost his license as an asbestos worker because the boss demanded a Social Security number. His group is made up of immigrant workers who were hired for the cleanup after the 2001 attack on the World Trade Center, but were given inadequate or no safety equipment for work in the toxic debris.

Union contingents at the New York march included a busload of members of Laborers International Union Local 79 and a group from Service Employees

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Protesters in Puerto Rico: Free Antonio Camacho!

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—In a March 30 statement from prison, Puerto Rican independence fighter Antonio Camacho said his arrest by FBI agents two days earlier is designed to intimidate the Puerto Rican people and "to try once again to suppress the aspirations of rescuing our sovereignty."

Demanding Camacho be freed, dozens of people picketed April 1 outside the U.S. prison in San Juan where he is being held. One of the protesters, Ramón Figueroa Sorrentini, said in a phone interview that a new coalition formed out of that demonstration, United Against Repression, will hold protests there every Saturday to demand his release.

"Antonio has been placed in the 'hole,'" said his attorney, Linda Backiel, in a March 30 phone interview. "He says he does not have access to needed medicine."

Camacho was seized by four to six FBI agents on the afternoon of March 28, minutes after he left the University of Puerto Rico campus here, where he had attended the opening day of the First Congress for the Decolonization of Puerto Rico. He was one of the main organizers of the conference.

As the FBI cops pointed their guns at him, Camacho responded, "You are the murderers of Ojeda!" according to his March 30 statement. Last September 23, FBI agents killed Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, a leader of the pro-independence group

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Largest U.S. auto parts maker, Delphi, to void union contracts

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Delphi Corp., the largest auto parts producer in the country, asked a federal bankruptcy court on March 31 to void its labor contracts with several unions so it can slash wages and lay off many of its 32,500 production workers in the United States. The company, which filed for bankruptcy October 8, plans to close 21 of its 29 U.S. plants. The plants slated for closure employ 20,000 workers. Delphi also plans to freeze the employees' pension plan in October and eliminate retiree health-care benefits as of July 1.

Delphi is the largest U.S. auto parts

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Midwest farmers donate tractors to farmers in South affected by Katrina

BY KARL BUTTS

PETAL, Mississippi—In a demonstrative act of solidarity with southern Mississippi farmers affected by Hurricane Katrina, five donated farm tractors were delivered on the bed of an 18-wheeler to the Indian Springs Farmers Cooperative April 1. Some 25 farmers and activists involved in Family Farm Defenders, which is based in Wisconsin, participated in delivering the "Project

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Africa, Cuba discussed at Temple Univ. meeting

BY ELLEN BERMAN

PHILADELPHIA—The 80 students and guests attending the weekly meeting of the Organization of African Students at Temple University on March 16 had the opportunity to hear Arrin Hawkins, who writes for the *Militant*, speak about "Imperialism, Central Africa, and the World Today."

Hawkins described her participation in an October book fair in Equatorial Guinea, a Central African country previously colonized by Spain. She noted the thirst among students there for books that explain the source of oppression and exploitation in today's world and offer a strategy to overturn those conditions.

Her talk sparked a lively discussion. Responding to points she made about the revolutionary legacy of Malcolm X and the avid interest in books by Pathfinder Press at the book fair, a student, Mawata Dunbar, asked, "Are there any publications in the country telling people what's going on in the world? Are there any Malcolm Xs?"

"Many Guinean students discussed confronting the problem of not having enough books about their history and heritage, but they are beginning to make advances," Hawkins said, including the success of the book fair itself.

"You've made some good points concerning the exploitation in Africa, how the U.S. comes into these countries and exploits them. But we can't spend too much time blaming the U.S. government. What about the role of African governments that don't protect the people from this?" was another question from the audience.

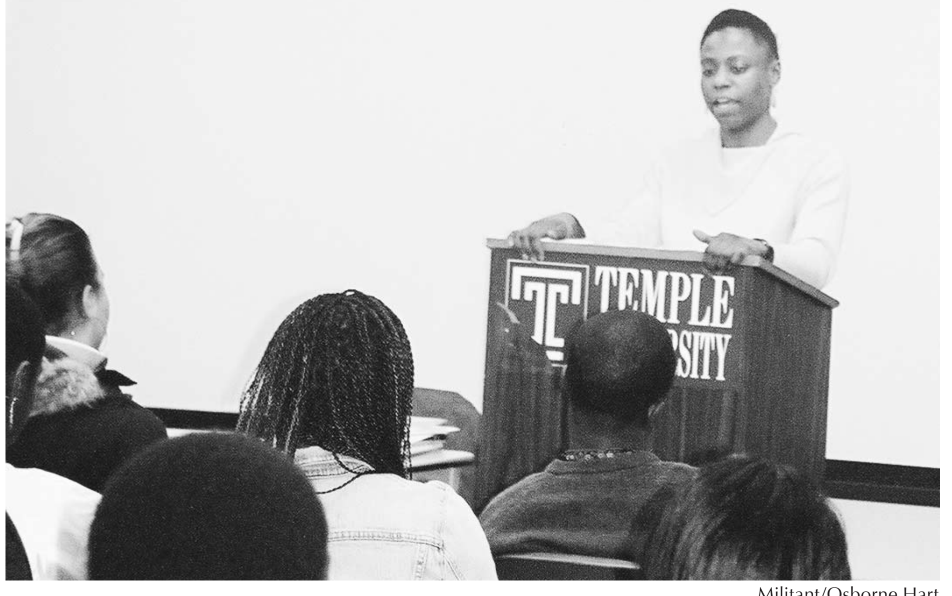
"The number one enemy facing working people and oppressed peoples, both in Africa and the United States, is imperialism," Hawkins said. "In that framework, capitalist governments in Africa serve the domestic and foreign exploiting classes."

Helen Massele asked Hawkins to talk more about the Cuban approach to treating malaria, which the speaker had alluded to. "My uncle works with Cuban doctors in Ethiopia," Massele said. "People from the United States can't even go to Cuba. The U.S. says it doesn't want Cuban medicine to help treat HIV."

"In the diamond mines of South Africa, the CEO makes 400 times what the workers make," another student, Andrew King, pointed out. "It's the same in the United States. In Cuba that's not allowed."

Hawkins replied, "The Cubans say malaria can be easily treated and prevented, for example with methods that kill the larvae of the mosquito that spreads the disease. Imperialism takes a piecemeal and costly approach. The Cubans go to the root of the problem. That's the difference between a government that puts private profits first and Cuba's government of workers and farmers."

Dozens of Cuban doctors serve in the most remote regions of Equatorial Guinea, where other doctors won't go, she added. "The Cuban Revolution has produced these kinds of human beings who are internationalists. Washington hates the example Cuba sets for people who see the possibility of following that road."



Militant/Osborne Hart

Arrin Hawkins speaking March 16 on anti-imperialist struggles at the weekly meeting of the Organization of African Students at Temple University in Philadelphia.

Black People's Unity Convention held in Gary, Indiana

BY OSBORNE HART

GARY, Indiana—Several hundred people attended the 2006 National Black People's Unity Convention (NBPUC) here March 9–12. The gathering marked the 34th anniversary since the 1972 National Black Political Convention held in Gary, which drew 8,000 delegates and reflected the sentiment for a Black independent political party at that time. The meeting featured speakers and panel sessions that included Black elected officials, corporate CEOs, academics, former civil rights leaders, religious figures, labor officials, and celebrities.

Organizers said the purpose of the event was to develop position papers to be published in the coming months to "refocus and rejuvenate the movement for Black economic empowerment." No resolutions were presented for vote by the convention.

We're here to "write an economic agenda for the liberation of Black people," said Ron Walters, author and University of Maryland professor, at the opening session.

In his keynote address, Democratic Party politician Jesse Jackson said political gains have been made since the 1972 convention. He pointed to the increased number of Black elected officials from about 900 in 1972 to slightly more than 9,000 last year.

"We're in the next stage of the struggle," Jackson said. "First there was the fight to end slavery. The second stage was to end Jim Crow. The third was the right to vote. The fourth is to gain access to capital."

"Political power without economic power is almost no power," said meeting co-chair Richard Hatcher, the former Gary mayor who was a co-chair of the 1972 convention. "We want to develop strategies to change that mindset, to begin to save and accumulate wealth." Hatcher suggested a Black stock exchange to promote investment in Black-owned companies.

New York Democrat Alfred Sharpton, Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, and Harry Belafonte were among the keynote speakers who echoed views similar to those of Jackson and Hatcher.

Jackson called for an April 1 demonstration in New Orleans in defense of the Voting Rights Act. He said the federal government has not provided a mechanism for the dispersed residents of New Orleans to vote in the April 22 municipal elections.

"This is a violation of the Voting Rights Act and disenfranchises Blacks," Jackson stated. He contrasted this situation to the way the government arranged for Iraqis, dispersed worldwide, to vote in the recent elections in Iraq.

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First shift in U.S. foreign policy since end of Cold War

Why was Cold War perceived as 'cold'?

(First of three articles)

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—The historic change currently taking place in the global positioning, military strategy, order of battle, and deployment of the U.S. military, known in Pentagon jargon as "transformation," is the crystallization of the first major shift in U.S. foreign policy since the Second World War. In a previous series the *Militant* outlined the progress Washington has made along these lines as described in the Pentagon's 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, and in testimony by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his top generals during congressional hearings on the Pentagon's annual budget request.

In this article, the first in a series, we will take up the unfolding international balance of class forces coming out of World War II that limited U.S. imperialism to a policy aimed at "containment" of the Soviet workers state and the revolutionary actions of workers in Eastern Europe that ended in further overturns of capitalist property relations. That period came to be known as the Cold War, even though Washington and its allies waged many hot wars using devastating firepower during that half century.

A second article will focus on U.S. imperialism's slowness in recognizing the consequences of the new international balance of class forces resulting from the end of the Cold War and making adjustments to respond to them.

The last article will take up the false and reactionary charge by liberal critics of the Bush administration—a charge also peddled by middle-class radicals and rightists—that U.S. foreign policy has been highjacked by the "neocons," often described by these forces as a "Jewish cabal."

Outcome of World War II

The U.S. imperialist rulers came out of World War II on top of their rivals in Berlin and Tokyo. But they failed to achieve two other important objectives. The first was the overthrow of the Soviet workers state. Washington hoped that through the war German imperialism would weaken the USSR to the point that it would fall, if not then soon after. Not only did that course fail but capitalist social relations were overturned across Eastern Europe.

Secondly, while Washington strengthened its position in the Pacific vis-à-vis the weakened British, Dutch, and French colonial powers, the war opened the way for a new upsurge of struggle by the peoples in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. They took advantage of the falling out among the imperialist powers—the "civilized hyenas" as Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin aptly called them—to fight for their independence. Victories in China, Korea, Algeria, Cuba, and Vietnam inspired revolutionary movements across North Africa and the Americas.

Having sent the world a message with the dropping of atomic bombs on the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the U.S. rulers began immediate preparation coming out of World War II for a third world war to finish the job in soviet Russia and to teach the colonial peoples, especially in Asia, a lesson.

They immediately bumped into obstacles, beginning with the U.S. working class. In 1943 miners led a victorious strike against unsafe conditions in the mines and the government's wage freeze and price controls. As the war ended the biggest strike wave since the 1930s swept the United States. It also opened the battle for Black rights, beginning with demands to end discrimination in the war industries.

Tens of thousands of GIs stationed in Asia that Washington aimed to use to block the Chinese revolution held rallies and circulated petitions demanding to be brought home. The story of this hidden chapter in the U.S. class struggle is told in the article by Mary-Alice Waters "1945: When U.S. Troops Said 'No!'" in issue 7 of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

Rumsfeld alluded to this turn of events in a speech on the lessons of the Cold War for today that he gave March 2 at the Truman Library. "Our country was tired after the Second World War," he said. "And strong strains of isolationism still persisted. Many Americans were not in the mood for a global involvement."



Prensa Latina

U.S. Marines suppress demonstration during 1965 invasion of Dominican Republic. During the Cold War, Washington carried out many hot wars like this assault.

Cold War: a series of hot wars

U.S. imperialism would be dealt its first military defeat by the people of Korea aided by thousands of Chinese troops. Moreover, mobilizations by working people in China against imperialist threats resulted in the expropriation of the last big capitalists in the cities and brought a workers state into being.

The USSR's development of nuclear weapons and space technology in the 1950s convinced the imperialists that the risks involved in a direct military assault on the Soviet Union and Eastern European workers states were too high. The strategic goal of overthrowing the soviet workers state shifted to one of containment: applying pressure on the Stalinist bureaucratic caste—which had usurped the October 1917 Russian Revolution—to police working people in the USSR and Eastern Europe, squelch all political initiatives, and isolate them from the struggles of workers and peasants around the world.

To this end Washington maintained massive bases across Europe housing tens of thousands of troops, heavy armored divisions, bombers, and land- and sea-based ballistic missile platforms. Under the umbrella of this military standoff, the imperialists conducted many hot wars against peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America fighting against colonial domination.

These included the U.S.-led wars against Korea and Vietnam and the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic; the French imperialist war against Algeria's independence; Portuguese imperialism's efforts, with Washington's and Pretoria's aid, to hold onto colonies in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique, to name a few. These imperialist wars represented the fiercest assaults last century, using the most firepower besides World War II. To cite one example, Washington dropped more bombs on Indochina than had been dropped in all previous wars combined.

So why did the prevailing attitude in bourgeois public opinion become that this was a "cold" war period? It had to do with the development of nuclear weapons by the USSR and the widespread belief that the nuclear standoff between Washington and Moscow precluded an atomic war. This belief made millions numb to the hot wars the imperialist powers waged.

New Israeli premier: 'We'll set Israel's final borders'

BY PAUL PEDERSON

"In the coming period we will move to set the final borders of the State of Israel. A Jewish state with a Jewish majority," said Ehud Olmert, the newly elected Israeli prime minister, in his victory speech following the national elections in Israel March 28. Kadima, the newly formed party that Olmert leads, won 29 of the 120 seats in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament—the largest share of any of the contending parties.

Olmert served as deputy prime minister under Ariel Sharon, who is in a coma following a severe stroke January 4. Last November, Sharon led a split in the right-wing Likud Party, which he had helped found. He then set up Kadima.

The split was precipitated by the unilateral move by the Sharon administration to shut down the Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip and its pledge to take further steps along these lines in the West Bank, including completion of a separation wall that physically divides the West Bank from Israel. This course is based on recognition by the Israeli rulers that the Zionist dream of a "Greater Israel" has collapsed, largely because of the dwindling immigration of Jews to the state. Today more Jews live in the United States than in Israel.

"The existence of a Jewish majority in the State of Israel cannot be maintained with the continued control over the Palestinian population in Judea, Samaria [West Bank] and Gaza," Olmert said in January. "We must create a clear boundary as soon as possible, one which will reflect the demographic reality on the ground."

Tel Aviv is pressing to define its borders on its terms. It has continued construction of the "security fence" in the West Bank. This wall, Olmert said in a March 28 opinion column in the Israeli daily *Yediot Ahronot*, will soon become the new border.

"We will determine the line of the security fence, and we will make sure that no Jewish settlements will be left on the other side of the fence," Olmert wrote. "Drawing the final borders is our obligation as leaders and as a society."

At least 8 percent of what had been Palestinian territory on the West Bank lies on the Israeli side of the new border. Many of the largest Israeli settlements there are being annexed to Israel.

The Israeli government is implementing this course without an agreement with the Palestinian National Authority, the government in the Palestinian territories, which is now run by Hamas—a group that has carried out many armed attacks on Israeli targets and has had many of its leaders assassinated by Israeli security forces.

Mexico fines hotel that expelled Cubans

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Mexican government officials ordered the U.S.-owned Maria Isabel Sheraton Hotel on March 24 to pay a $112,000 fine for expelling 16 Cuban officials meeting with U.S. oil company representatives there February 2. "Mexico's Foreign Relations Department said the hotel violated national commerce laws, which bar companies from discriminating against customers because of their nationality," reported the Associated Press.

The meeting at the Sheraton in Mexico was organized by the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association. It included representatives of ExxonMobil, Valero Energy Corporation, and Caterpillar, to discuss prospects for investing in offshore drilling in Cuba's territorial waters. The U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control told Starwood Hotels, which owns the Sheraton, that it was violating the Trading with the Enemy Act and the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 by allowing the meeting to take place on its premises. These laws prohibit U.S. companies and their subsidiaries from providing any facilities or other services to Cuban individuals or companies.

In imposing the fine, the Foreign Ministry said the hotel breached Mexico's Trade Protection and Investment Law, which forbids the application of the laws of a third country in Mexico. "The Foreign Ministry also warned that if the hotel again applies such extraterritorial laws, a fine will be imposed of twice the amount of the present one," reported the Cuban daily *Granma*.

Farmers donate tractors



Militant/Paul Mailhot

Farmers from Wisconsin deliver on April 1 five tractors they donated to farm co-operatives in Mississippi. From left: Mike McNair of the Mississippi Association of Cooperatives, and Joel Greeno and John Kinsman of the Family Farm Defenders.

Continued from front page

Tractor" donation. Joining them were a half dozen members of the cooperative. The solidarity action received substantial publicity in the local press.

Mike McNair, the co-operative's marketing specialist, told the *Militant*, "This donation by the Family Farm Defenders is certainly welcome and will help us to produce more and keep production going during critical times. Most of the farmers in nearby co-ops are either borrowing or sharing tractors."

The tractors were donated to the Mississippi Association of Cooperatives, the state chapter of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, which grew out of the civil rights movement. It helps Black farmers fight foreclosures and loss of their land.

At a panel discussion with representatives of Family Farm Defenders and the Mississippi Association of Cooperatives, Randy Jasper, a dairy and grain farmer from Muscoda, Wisconsin, emphasized that the tractors were not charity but solidarity in the struggle by working farmers to keep from being driven out of farming. Jasper said this after hearing Darnella Burkett, who farms with her father and works on the co-op staff. She described the fight to maintain production levels with the limited resources available to co-op members and the constant pressure from real estate speculators to sell out.

Joel Greeno, a Wisconsin dairy farmer who heads up Family Farm Defenders' "Project Tractor," said he was committed to this effort through his experience. His family lost everything in a farm foreclosure. He said that has motivated him to find ways to prevent this from happening to other farmers.

During a visit to co-op member Donnie Pen-Travis's farm, Greeno said, "The Tractor Project is a way to bring people together, an effort to unite around." He added, "While we've been here we've been having discussions on helping farmers get into potential markets where we are and on the sharing of goods. The whole purpose is to buy some time, make it a little easier, and get through these difficult times. We can't afford to lose another farmer."

John Kinsman, a Wisconsin dairy and tree farmer and president of Family Farm Defenders, said he thought they were the ones who have gained the most from this effort and that "this is just the beginning."

420 new endorsers back labor defense case in last 2 months

BY JOHN STUDER

PHILADELPHIA, April 4—Some 100 new endorsers signed up with the Militant Fighting Fund the last two weeks, for a total of 420 since February 1, toward a goal of 500 that organizers of the campaign to defend labor rights had projected reaching by March 31. The final total will be higher, as endorsements obtained last month continue to come in.

The Militant Fighting Fund was established to help defend the *Militant* against a harassment lawsuit filed by C.W. Mining, the owner of the Co-Op coal mine near Huntington, Utah. The socialist weekly has been targeted because of its consistent news coverage and editorial support to the efforts by Co-Op miners to win representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in order to seek livable wages, safe working conditions, and dignity on the job.

The Militant Fighting Fund is also publicizing the defense efforts of the UMWA and 16 Co-Op miners, who are also defendants in the suit. The union is represented by its general counsel and individual miners are represented by counsel provided by the UMWA.

The effort to defend labor rights is winning support worldwide. New endorsers include International Longshoremen's Association Local 1316 in Beaumont, Texas, which also donated $500; Douglas Polley, president of the North Georgia Building Trades Council; UNITE HERE Local 2 in San Francisco; and Sandra Stimpson, Georgia director of UNITE HERE.

About 20 unionists in Minneapolis/St. Paul signed up leading up to a March 25 meeting to defend labor rights held at the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789 hall. They include Ted Ludwig, president of Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association Local 33, which has been on strike against Northwest Airlines since last summer; Ken Hooker, president of International Association of Machinists Local 1833; Steve Nwaiwu, organizer of Service Employees International Union Local 113; and Jennifer Christenson, secretary-treasurer of UFCW Local 789.

Others who attended the National Black People's Unity Convention in Gary, Indiana, also endorsed. They include Chris Silvera, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 808 in Long Island City, New York; Vivien Dixon-Shim, president of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 1363 in Miami; and Mike Payne, political/community action representative of International Longshoremen's Association Local 1526 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Endorsements have come in from Canada, New Zealand, and Sweden too. Ray Urquhart, lead organizer for the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union in Huntly, New Zealand; Lionel MacEachern, chief steward of UFCW Local 175 at Maple Leaf packing in Hamilton, Ontario; and six members of the Food Workers Union at the Atria Lithells meatpacking company in Stockholm, Sweden, signed up.

The defense effort also won support at the First National Congress for the Decolonization of Puerto Rico held recently in San Juan. Endorsers include José Solís, a professor at the University of Puerto Rico and a former political prisoner framed up in Chicago for supporting independence for Puerto Rico; and Luis Rosa, another *independentista* and former political prisoner.

The fund's administrative center has now been relocated from Salt Lake City to Philadelphia. Endorsements and contributions should be sent to the Militant Fighting Fund at P.O. Box 42896, Philadelphia, PA 19101. The e-mail address remains the same: *militantfightingfund@yahoo.com*

Delphi to void its union contracts

Continued from front page

supplier. Its largest customer is General Motors, which spun off the company into a separate entity in 1999. Delphi sells $15 billion in parts annually to GM, with another $13 billion going to other customers, including Toyota and Ford.

Prior to filing its request in a bankruptcy court, Delphi offered union members wage cuts of up to 40 percent. This would involve an immediate $5 hourly pay cut to $22 for production workers, and in September 2007 a further reduction to $16.50 an hour. The company also promised that those still working who accept these cuts would get a "wage buydown" payment of $50,000 each.

The United Auto Workers (UAW), which represents 24,000 union members at Delphi, rejected this proposal. Some 8,000 other Delphi workers, who belong to the International Union of Electronic Workers-Communications Workers of America, have already voted to authorize strikes.

If the bankruptcy court rubber stamps the company's quest to annul the contract, "It appears that it will be impossible to avoid a long strike," said a statement issued March 31 by the UAW.

"A strike at GM's biggest supplier could shut down the auto maker's assembly lines within days, costing it as much as $130 million a day in the first two months," noted an article in the March 31 *Wall Street Journal*. "Ultimately, the prospect of bankruptcy for GM is inevitable," Kevin Tynan, a senior analyst at Argus Research, told the *Investor's Business Daily*. "If there is a strike it accelerates the timeline."

GM has guaranteed benefits to thousands of Delphi workers. Without funds from GM, noted the April 1 *Journal*, all Delphi production workers "would get an immediate cut in pay to $12.50 an hour, and no dental coverage." In March, Delphi, GM, and the UAW agreed to push about 13,000 hourly Delphi workers into retirement and transfer 5,000 others back to GM.

The bankruptcy court is scheduled to hear arguments in early May on Delphi's request to tear up its union contracts, with a decision expected to be issued by the judge in June.

New Orleans displaced workers: 'We want to return'

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

NEW ORLEANS—More than 2,000 people rallied outside the convention center here and marched across the Mississippi River bridge April 1. The action was called by the Rainbow Coalition and the NAACP to demand voting access in the May municipal election and April 22 mayoral primary for the thousands of displaced New Orleans residents who now live in other states. It was promoted by Jesse Jackson, Alfred Sharpton, and Ray Nagin, the present New Orleans mayor running for re-election along with 21 other candidates. Many participants came to the demonstration from Texas, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Alabama, and Georgia. In addition, some came from as far as Detroit and New York.

Hundreds of New Orleans residents swelled the ranks of the march as it moved across the Mississippi River bridge in symbolic reminder of the events of Sept. 1, 2005, when working people from New Orleans, most of them Black, trying to escape from the devastation of the hurricane and abysmal conditions at the convention center, crossed the bridge only to be turned back at gunpoint by police from the municipality of Gretna on the other side. Constance Stephens came with her daughter Evelyn to participate in the bridge action. Her house in Moss Point, Mississippi, was demolished by Hurricane Katrina. "We had to come here to show our support," she explained, as she and Evelyn gave out water to the marchers in the hot sun.

Among the most energetic participants were New Orleans teachers campaigning for the repair and reopening of public schools. "We are here to make sure that schools here open so that children can have access to the public education we have fought for," Linda Stelly told the *Militant*. "Right now the only schools that are open are private charter schools," explained Stelly, a New Orleans teacher for decades and a member of the American Federation of Teachers.

Many demonstrators saw the basic issue as that of the right of return for themselves and other displaced residents. Two days before the action it was announced that the estimated cost of rebuilding New Orleans's levees damaged by Hurricane Katrina may triple to more than $9 billion, delaying rebuilding and leaving working-class neighborhoods without insurance coverage and vulnerable in the next hurricane season.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Auto workers in Ontario end two-week strike

ST. THOMAS, Ontario—At a March 25 meeting here more than 2,000 members of Canadian Autoworkers (CAW) Local 1001 voted by a more than 90 percent margin to end their two-week strike against Sterling Trucks and accept a new three-year contract. Workers had walked out March 10 after the company stalled on issues around wages, job security, time off, and benefits. Sterling Trucks is owned by Freightliner. This was the local's second strike since being organized in 2002. The first walkout involved a successful fight to eliminate the temporary worker classification that covered one-third of the workforce.

—Annette Kouri

New York sanitation workers strike over health-care cuts

BROOKLYN, New York—"It's going on all across America," said Teamsters Local 813 member Robert Ohlsson April 4 on the second day of a walkout at Waste Management Inc. (WMI). "We just can't make it like this," he said of the concessions on health coverage the company imposed on workers after the contract expired in November.

Pickets explain that the 120 sanitation truck drivers and helpers in New York and about 85 Teamsters in Washington, D.C., went on strike because the bosses' change in the health plan will cost them about $300 per month. The Tuesday–Saturday workweek demanded by the company will cost workers another $105 per week in lost overtime pay, said local president Sylvester Needham.

The company has about 10,000 commercial accounts in the New York area, including the Sheraton Hotel, and Shea and Yankee stadiums.

—Michael Italie

Teachers in Detroit stage 'sick-out' to protest pay cuts

DETROIT—Some 1,500 teachers staged a "sick-out" March 22, closing 54 public schools here for the day. The action came on the day teachers were to "loan" one day's work without pay as part of the administration's cost-cutting measures. The Board of Education promises it will pay teachers back next year. The Detroit Federation of Teachers last year agreed to "loan" the board five days in face of demands for a 10 percent pay cut. While teachers in Detroit have not received any pay raise for the last three years, on February 9 the school board voted a pay increase for school principals and administrators.

—Marshall Lambie

Ontario farmers rally, demand gov't aid



Militant/John Steele

TORONTO—Hundreds of farmers from across Ontario rallied here March 23—the day provincial officials voted on a new budget—to demand financial aid. Since the beginning of the week farmers in tractors had been circling government buildings to draw attention to their demands.

"We don't want to be here," said farmer Steve Webster from Blythe, Ontario, "but we have no choice." Webster has been living in his car and at the front door of the government buildings for a week and has vowed to stay until the government responds to the farmers' demands. In spite of the protests, the new budget contains no new funds to deal with losses from last years' crop. Farmers have now called a demonstration for April 5 in Ottawa, Canada's capital, to demand action from the federal government.

—JOHN STEELE

Since copper strike in Arizona more workers join union

KEARNY, Arizona—"You're only as safe as your union is strong," said G. Kelly Hunt, a heavy equipment operator for 34 years who is safety chairman of United Steelworkers Local 5252 at the Asarco Mine here. Some 1,500 copper workers at Asarco operations in Arizona and Texas went through a four-month strike last year to defeat a union-busting move by the company. Asarco sought to cut wages by $4 to $5 per hour, make huge cuts in medical coverage, do away with pensions for new hires, and freeze pensions for the rest of the workforce. Strikers returned to work under the existing contract, which was extended until Dec. 31, 2006.

Since the strike, Hunt said that a large percentage of the new hires are becoming union members. Arizona is an open shop state, so workers must sign up individually to join the union. "Many come up even before their 90 day probation is over and ask about joining the union," Hunt said. He said he tells new workers, "Nothing you are getting on this job was or will be given to you by the company. It was all won by the union."

—Wendy Lyons

High court to schools: no military recruiters, no funds

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled March 6 that colleges and universities face loss of federal funding if they restrict military recruitment on campus. The 8-0 decision in *Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, v. Forum for Academic and Institutional Rights* (FAIR) overruled an appeals court finding that an association of law schools and law school faculties may refuse access to the recruiters because of the military's discriminatory policy against gays and lesbians.

These schools had based their ban on the "don't ask, don't tell" policy in the military initiated by the Clinton administration, which requires homosexual soldiers to hide their sexual orientation or else be discharged.

The 36 law schools and faculties that make up FAIR had challenged the constitutionality of a series of government measures known as the Solomon Amendment. An appeals court ruled that this addendum to the 1995 National Defense Authorization Act violated the universities' First Amendment rights by compelling them to subsidize the government's views "by putting demands on the law schools' employees and resources."

The Solomon Amendment denies certain funding to any university that does not provide military recruiters the same access to its campus and students that it extends to nonmilitary recruiters. This applies to funding from the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Transportation, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, the CIA, and the National Nuclear Security Administration of the Department of Energy.

Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) and other military recruiters were expelled from many campuses at the height of the movement in the United States against Washington's war on Vietnam. Columbia University, for example, dissolved its ROTC program in 1969 and last year the university senate voted 51-11 to not allow the program to return.

As Washington seeks to prepare its armed forces for imperialist interventions around the globe, it is seeking to reverse gains such as these working people made during previous struggles. Toward that end, in *Rumsfeld v. FAIR* the Supreme Court argued as precedent an earlier case in which the judges found that "'judicial deference…is at its apogee' when Congress legislates under its authority to raise and support armies."

The court unanimously stated that—funding or no funding, discrimination or no discrimination—Congress has "the authority to require campus access to military recruiters."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

April 17, 1981

NEW YORK—We can spy on anyone, whether they've done anything or not.

True, we did commit some illegal acts against the socialists. But at the time we really did think they were legal.

That was the thrust of the opening argument by government lawyer Peter Salerno in the suit brought by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance.

At the heart of the argument was the assertion that it is up to the "discretion" of the government to decide who it spies on, and how.

Margaret Winter, chief counsel for the SWP and YSA, said in her opening statement that the government's extensive investigation over forty years had established that the SWP had not broken a single law and had no plans to do so.

She said the socialists want a court order barring any future investigation of the SWP and YSA based on their ideas and activities. They also want damages, she said, for illegal activities committed against them by the government.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

April 16, 1956

It will take 100 station wagons to operate an effective transportation system for the Negro people in Montgomery, according to Rev. M.L. King, leader of the bus protest movement in that city.

In an interview with a staff writer for the weekly Afro-American, the Rev. Mr. King disclosed that the Montgomery Improvement Association had applied for a "jitney service" franchise.

"We were turned down and plan to apply again. If the franchise is not granted, perhaps we will run a free jitney service.

"I think that we could do with about 100 station wagons. We could operate the free transportation system through contributions in our churches."

Farrell Dobbs, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, now on tour in support of the bus protest movement, is emphasizing the need for station wagons to build the Montgomery car pool. He is calling on union members and leaders to express their support in the form of collections to buy station wagons for the freedom fighters of Montgomery.

THE MILITANT
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

April 15, 1931

Alfonso has quit the soil of Spain and the bourgeois republicans, assisted by their socialist allies, have proclaimed the republic. The universal acclaim with which the departure of the royal family was met by the people furnishes eloquent testimony to the profound unpopularity of the monarchy. In the proclamation of the republic, the Spanish masses have taken their first big step in breaking with the old régime and towards establishing their own rule tomorrow.

But the bloodless victory of the republican-socialist alliance over the Spanish monarch guarantees neither the radical uprooting of monarchical rule, the establishment of the republic, nor the real people's régime of tomorrow. The essential evils with which the reign of the Bourbons inflicted the people still remain. More, the republican bourgeoisie, even with the servile aid of the social democrats, is incapable of solving any of the tasks which press with such burning urgency for solution.

Immigrant rights march marks L.A. event on ‘Our History Still Being Written’



Militant/Eli Green

Patti Iiyama (speaking), Jacob Perasso, and Mary-Alice Waters gave presentations at April 1 meeting at Japanese American Cultural and Community Center in Los Angeles to promote new book by Pathfinder Press, *Our History Is Still Being Written.*

BY WENDY LYONS

LOS ANGELES—A spirited meeting took place here April 1 to discuss and promote the new Pathfinder book *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution* (see ad below).

Many in the audience of 110 had taken part in the March 25 mass mobilization here to oppose an immigration bill that would criminalize undocumented workers. Among them were a number of students who had joined one of the high school walkouts that took place after the march and defied the subsequent "lockdowns" of the schools. Several people had been part of other immigrant rights actions that morning in Los Angeles and Costa Mesa.

Also among those attending were John Wong and other members of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California; Mike Isley, a copper miner who went through a recent strike against Asarco in Kearny, Arizona; Norma and Norberto Martínez, whose son was killed by the police and who have organized others to fight police brutality; Ming Tu, business manager of the *Amerasia Journal* published at the University of California at Los Angeles; and film director Nick Castle. Participants came from San Diego, the San Francisco Bay Area, Santa Cruz, Phoenix, and Seattle. The meeting was the second of four regional events (see front-page ad).

James Harris, from the Los Angeles Socialist Workers Party, opened the meeting with a description of the recent march of nearly 1 million. "As I watched people go by, packed building to building, for three and a half hours, I kept thinking about the line from the *Communist Manifesto* that says: The bourgeoisie produces its own gravediggers," he said. "Capitalism brought all these people to this country and then expects them to be silent, obedient, and accept any indignity. But millions are standing up and saying *No*."

The meeting featured Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the new book and member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party; Jacob Perasso, a national organizer of the Young Socialists; and Patti Iiyama, an oil worker and volunteer in the Pathfinder printing project.

"Whether organizing a walkout or struggling to strengthen a union, fighters today will be able to see themselves in the pages of *Our History Is Still Being Written* and learn valuable lessons from this book," said Perasso, who had joined a student speak-out here against anti-immigrant laws the day before.

Iiyama, whose parents were among the 120,000 Japanese incarcerated in U.S. internment camps during World War II, said, "To many today, it sounds outrageous to make it a felony to be an immigrant, but the criminalization of immigrants is not new." Beginning in the mid-19th century, she said, Chinese immigrants in the West worked in the mines, built the railroads, and cultivated the fields but were not allowed to become citizens, own property, bring women here, or marry whites. They faced segregation and lynch mob violence. Later the Japanese and other Asian immigrants faced similar treatment.

She quoted Moisés Sío Wong, one of the three Chinese-Cuban generals interviewed in the book, saying, "What's the difference in the experience of Chinese in Cuba and other countries of the diaspora? The difference is that here a socialist revolution took place. The revolution eliminated discrimination based on the color of a person's skin. Above all, it eliminated the property relations that create not only economic but also social inequality between rich and poor."

Waters urged those present to use *Our History Is Still Being Written* "as a powerful introduction to the Cuban Revolution—and to the men and women who made the revolution and who continue to make it today."

She pointed to the three generals' firsthand account of how 375,000 Cuban volunteers went to Angola in the 1970s and '80s, ready to give their lives to defeat the invasion of that country by the army of the hated apartheid regime in South Africa. "They did not get a diamond or a drop of oil in return," she said. "They returned with nothing but the bones of those who gave their lives. They fought to hasten the day when the kind of social solidarity of working people that we saw in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and on the streets of Los Angeles last week during the march, will dominate the world instead of the dog-eat-dog relations of capitalism."

During the discussion period after the presentations, Pablo, a worker originally from Chile who had purchased *Our History Is Still Being Written* at the March 25 demonstration, said the book was an important contribution to the history of the working class. "I have been through years of watching immigrants be humiliated and no one standing up," he said. "Now we see people waking up, marching, and seeing the truth. And the truth can set you free."

Another participant asked if many in Cuba are attracted to the "market economy" course of the Chinese and Vietnamese governments.

There is less discussion in Cuba today of looking to Chinese policies as a possible economic model than even a few years ago, Waters said. She noted that knitting trade ties with China has been important to Cuba's economic recovery after the shortages of the 1990s when

Continued on page 7

L.A. residents: Respect unearthed Chinese graves

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

LOS ANGELES—The accidental unearthing of the graves of Chinese-Americans here recently provided a glimpse of the real history—the labor and culture, as well as the racism and violence—of the development of capitalism in this city and country.

When workers building a commuter rail line in the Boyle Heights neighborhood found the skeletal remains of 108 people, rice bowls, jade bracelets, Chinese burial bricks, and Asian coins, the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) initially tried to sweep the discovery under the rug. The MTA did not want to delay its $898 million subway project connecting East Los Angeles with downtown and said it found no reason to halt construction after the remains and artifacts had been removed.

According to the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, the excavation site is part of a Chinese cemetery, the last known public record that dates from the 1920s. Archival documents indicate that 902 Chinese were buried at the site in a corner of a potter's field.

It remains to be settled whether the remains will finally receive a respectful burial. Irvin Lai, 78, a long-time member of the Chinese Historical Society and its past president, is demanding the MTA re-inter the bodies at Evergreen Cemetery, where in the early 1900s the Chinese were not allowed to enter, let alone be buried.

Lai said the remains belonged to men who lived at a time when the Chinese were relegated to the lowest rung of society. An estimated 10,000 Chinese lived in Los Angeles in late 19th century. From the moment of their arrival, they were exploited as cheap labor, working under harsh conditions as ditch diggers, canal builders, and domestic servants. They were segregated into ghettos, they could not marry, own property, and they were banned from most shops and public institutions.

They were also the target of racist violence. On Oct. 24, 1871, a mob of hundreds of whites rampaged through the local Chinese community, attacking every Chinese person they encountered. The "Chinese Massacre" resulted in the murder of around 20 people. No one was ever arrested, charged, or prosecuted.

"They treated the Chinese just as bad when they were dead," stated Lai. "They were treated like animals."

"Don't throw away our history," Lai told MTA representatives at a March 23 meeting of the MTA Review Advisory Committee. "A child wants to know, 'Where is my grandfather buried?'" The gathering of 75 was held in Boyle Heights, a largely Chicano and Mexican neighborhood.

"I told the MTA to stop digging," Ernestina Montellano said at the meeting. "The train is not for the community but for the rich people and for condos. I want to thank the Chinese people for helping us publicize this fight."

It is unlikely many surviving relatives in the United States will be found. Chinese women were prohibited from entering the country in that period. In 1882 U.S. Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act. No immigration of Chinese laborers to the United States was permitted for the next 10 years, and those living in the U.S. were not allowed to become naturalized citizens.

In 1904 the Chinese Exclusion Act was extended indefinitely. It was not repealed until Dec. 17, 1943. Chinese could then become citizens, but the exclusion was still enforced. Congress restricted the immigration of Chinese to a measly quota of 105 per year.

Immigrant rights actions

Continued from front page
International Union Local 1199. A dozen members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 348 from the Sweet N' Low plant in Brooklyn carried their signs in the protest.

Most of the demonstrators came on their own or were organized by community or church groups. The action was promoted widely in the Spanish-language press and radio.

On March 25, more than half a million people turned out in Los Angeles to protest HR 4437. Under the impact of this and other recent demonstrations nationwide, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted March 27 not to include felony charges in its proposal. An alternate bill has been introduced in the Senate by Republican John McCain and Democrat Edward Kennedy. It would establish a pool of "guest workers" with fewer protections than other U.S. residents. Undocumented workers would have to pay hefty fines and application fees to receive a temporary work visa for six years, during which they would be required to maintain their job, a condition tying their status to their employers and allowing the U.S. government to track their movements. After six years they would be able to apply for permanent residency. The bill would also beef up the border police.

Seeking to tap the widespread anger among immigrants at the Sensenbrenner bill, some politicians are promoting the McCain-Kennedy proposal as an alternative, saying it would allow many of the 12 million undocumented immigrants to gain legal status. Speaking along these lines, several Democratic politicians addressed the New York action, including U.S. congresspeople Charles Rangel, Nydia Velázquez, and Anthony Weiner; and State Senator Ruben Diaz.

Among the demonstrators, there was a mix of opinions about the proposed bills. Carolina and Ricardo Rodríguez, from Winchester, Virginia, said the McCain-Kennedy bill would be a "step in the right direction. It's better because six years is enough. Most people come for that."

Mayra Hernández, a student at the Columbia School of Social Work, said the McCain-Kennedy bill was a form of "legalized slavery" like the U.S. government's 1942–64 bracero program. A contingent of 50 from an alliance of Chinese immigrant organizations marched in opposition to both immigration bills.

Summing up the feeling of many marchers, María González, a house cleaner and baby sitter originally from El Salvador, said, "These laws make our lives hell. We have a right to a driver's license and other things in order to live."

❖

Among other actions that day, 5,000 people marched to the state capitol in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, against a proposal in the state that would bar undocumented workers from Medicaid, food stamps, and other programs, and require state workers to report on applicants whose documents they suspected.

In Newark, New Jersey, hundreds of students marched calling for passage of the federal Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act that would provide undocumented high school graduates temporary residency so they could attend college and be eligible for reduced in-state tuition rates.

On March 31, some 2,000 students in San Diego skipped school to attend an immigrant rights march and rally. Another 1,000 high school students marched in Bakersfield, California. About 2,000 protesters, most of them high school students, rallied that day in El Paso, Texas.

More than 2,500 people marched in Yakima, Washington, April 2. In Miami that day hundreds gathered outside the Orange Bowl to demand amnesty for undocumented workers. More protests are planned nationwide for April 10.

Eric Simpson from Miami and Cecelia Moriarity from Seattle contributed to this article.



Militant/Scott Breen

Some 2,500 people rallied April 2 in Yakima, Washington, against bill that would criminalize undocumented workers. Signs say, "We are not criminals" and "Yes, we can."

Los Angeles event

Continued from page 6
Cuba abruptly lost most of its trade with the former Soviet Union. But in Cuba today, unlike China, there is no massive investment of foreign capital, no imperialist penetration of the banking system, capitalist investors can't directly contract labor, and no one pays for health care.

"There is an awareness that what Cuba is doing is unique," Waters noted. "*Our History Is Still Being Written* can help make the example of socialist Cuba known around the world."

Most of those at the meeting stayed for dinner and more discussion over food and refreshments. High school students who had joined walkouts met workers who have been involved in labor struggles. Many learned more about the history of Chinese immigration to California from members of the Chinese Historical Society, who have been fighting for a decent burial of the remains of Chinese workers unearthed in a local railway project (see article on page 6).

At the meeting 17 copies of *Our History Is Still Being Written* were sold along with other Pathfinder titles. Audience members contributed more than $4,300 to aid the effort to distribute the new book as widely as possible, including helping make copies of the book available in Cuba. The next day, a number of young people who attended the meeting met to find out more about the Young Socialists and its activities, which include building the May 20 march in Washington to demand, "Hands off Venezuela and Cuba!"

How Chinese, other immigrants were excluded from U.S.

(First of three articles)

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The U.S. rulers are involved today in debate and discussion on reshaping their immigration laws. Their aim is to regularize the status of some of the 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States in order to tighten their control over this section of the working class and maintain a stable pool of super-exploited labor.

A major section of the U.S. ruling class favors instituting some form of "guest worker" program that would grant temporary residency to undocumented workers, and extend it to a certain number of future immigrants. After paying a large fee and registering in a federal database, guest workers would be required to be employed though a government-organized job registry for six years or lose their status and face deportation.

At the same time, U.S. legislators are discussing steps to beef up the number of cops along the borders and build fences along parts of the 2,000-mile frontier between the United States and Mexico.

A minority among the U.S. rulers is pressing for measures to further criminalize the undocumented. The Sensenbrenner bill, passed by the House of Representatives in December, would make it an aggravated felony to be an undocumented immigrant and criminalize those who aid them. This proposal has sparked the largest-ever demonstrations by immigrant workers in cities across the country in recent weeks.

The number of immigrant workers entering the United States in the 1990s exceeded 9 million, greater than the largest previous recorded migration of 8.8 million in the period 1901–1910. In the first decade of the 20th century, 92 percent came from Europe. Eighty years later this figure dropped to 14 percent, while 49 percent now arrive from the Americas, a majority from Mexico and across the Mexican border from other Latin American countries.

To gain a better understanding of the bosses' current immigrant "reform" proposals it's helpful to review the record of how the U.S. rulers have dealt with immigration in the past. This article reviews the period from the 1880s to the 1920s.

In 1882 Congress passed the first federal law restricting immigration to the United States—the Chinese Exclusion Act. This law halted immigration of Chinese workers—Chinese merchants, students, and diplomats were exempted—and declared Chinese already living in the United States to be ineligible to become naturalized citizens. The law remained in effect for 61 years, repealed only in December 1943. Its backers scapegoated Chinese workers, arguing that they were taking away "American" jobs.

Chinese began to arrive in large numbers after 1850 as part of the accelerated capitalist development of the United States from coast to coast. Faced with systematic discrimination, they were pressed into low-paying jobs such as railway construction and forced to live in segregated ghettos. In 1885 and 1887 the Alien Contract Labor Laws further restricted the immigration of foreign-born contract laborers.

Added restrictions on immigration were undertaken as Washington entered World War I and in its aftermath. In 1917 Congress approved a law requiring immigrants to pass a literacy test showing that they could read and write in their native language. It also included an "Asiatic barred zone" provision banning immigration from South and Southeast Asia, which remained in place until 1952.

Citing this 1917 immigration ban from Asia, the Supreme Court ruled in 1923 in *U.S. v. Bhagat Singh Thind* that those from India already living in the U.S. were ineligible to become naturalized citizens. This decision resulted in the denaturalization of some who had previously become U.S. citizens. In California, where a number of Chinese resided, a 1913 law prohibited those ineligible for citizenship from owning or leasing land.

In 1921, when 700,000 European workers immigrated to the United States, Congress passed the Emergency Quota Act. It set limits based on national origin. Yearly European migration was not to exceed 356,000. Immigration was limited to no more than 3 percent of the population of a nationality living in the U.S. based on the 1910 Census. Annual quotas for southern and eastern Europe were set at less than a quarter of the numbers admitted before World War I.

The quota system was made permanent and the ceiling lowered even further in the Immigration Act of 1924. The annual worldwide quota was reduced to 165,000. In a blatant effort to limit immigration from southern and eastern Europe, annual quotas for that region were set at 2 percent of each nationality as recorded in the 1890 census. This slashed immigration from Poland, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Russia, the Balkans, Portugal, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Spain, and Estonia by 87 percent, to less than 20,000. Only 3,845 were now allowed annually from Italy, 2,248 from Russia, 131 from Spain, and 100 from Greece.

In signing this bill, President Calvin Coolidge declared, "Every object of our institutions of society and government will fail unless America be kept American." The law, making no distinction between immigrants and refugees, prevented many eastern Europeans from fleeing to the U.S. during World War II.

The legislation greatly curtailed immigration. From 1924 to 1947, only 2.7 million immigrants came to the United States, a total equal to the number entering during any two-year period before World War I. During the Depression years of the 1930s, only 528,000 immigrated to the United States. For the first time, those leaving the country outnumbered those entering.

The law required all immigrants to obtain a visa to enter the U.S. The quota system did not apply, however, to countries in the Western Hemisphere. This legislation remained in effect until 1965.

Working people are the heirs to all human culture

Below is an excerpt from What Is Surrealism? *one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for April. This selection of writings by André Breton gives a compact survey of the views and perspectives of the founder and major theorist of the surrealist movement—one of the most influential currents of 20th century art. The excerpt is from a talk Breton gave in 1933 on the occasion of a "proletarian literature contest" organized by the French Communist Party daily* L'Humanité. *Breton was an outspoken opponent of the Stalinist degeneration of the Communist International and the servile impact it had on artists and intellectuals under its influence. Copyright © 1978 by Franklin Rosemont.*

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY ANDRÉ BRETON

It is well known that the notion of proletarian literature, which is actually quite simple, nevertheless has resulted in many abuses of thought and language. To tell the truth, I persist in thinking the words "proletarian literature" are rather unfortunate. I believe however, that if we cannot interpret them to the letter the best we can do is to try to see *what they sanction in terms of use-value.* It suffices to recall here how the question was resolved in a passage from the Kharkov theses ("Resolution on the International Revolutionary Proletarian Literary Movement")….


From left: André Breton, a leader of the surrealist movement; Mexican muralist Diego Rivera; and Russian Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky in Mexico, 1938.

If we carefully examine this declaration we may find that the discussion has suffered from misdirected zeal. Is this because it explicitly says that "In its essence proletarian literature...is *opposed* to all past and present literature of other classes?" This, it seems to me, would be viewing "opposition" in a less than dialectical sense. Besides, didn't Lenin take pains to specify that the workers will participate in the elaboration of an independent ideology only when efforts are made to raise their level of consciousness? It is important, he says in *What Is To Be Done?,* that they "not confine themselves to the artificially restricted limits of 'literature for workers' but learn, in increasing degree, to master *general literature.* It would be even truer to say 'are not confined' instead of 'not confine themselves,' because the workers themselves wish to read, and do read, all that is written for the intelligentsia, and only a few pitiable intellectuals believe that it is enough 'for workers' to be told a few things about factory conditions and to be reminded over and over again what has long been known."

Let us not forget that, as Lenin has also said [in *The Tasks of the Youth Leagues,* 1920], "proletarian culture...is not clutched out of thin air; it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the logical development of the store of knowledge mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist, land-owner and bureaucratic society...."

May it be said that the present forms distinguishing those works summarily called proletarian, whether in the capitalist countries or in Soviet Russia, should be taken as the definitive, complete forms of proletarian literature? Such would serve only those who are incapable of conceiving these forms dynamically, it having been claimed that we are waiting for such forms to be constituted on the model of the fixed, unchangeable forms exemplified by the sonnet and the classical tragedy in five acts. Assuredly, these forms are only transitory moulds which of themselves must not be regarded as objects of imitation for their own sake. I believe, in sum, that we must guard against two deviations; that we must guard against either underestimating or overestimating the present possibilities of existence of a proletarian literature. (The same considerations apply, needless to say; to proletarian art.)

Is this literature completely realizable under the economic and social conditions imposed by the contemporary world—the building of socialism in the USSR, the proliferating contradictions of capitalism in other countries? I think not. Not only do I think not; but I hardly regret it. I do not regret it because the possibility of integral realization of a proletarian art and literature, particularly under a capitalist regime, would give us one reason less to overthrow that regime. But may it be said that proletarian literature announces itself and begins to characterize itself, through the most important works coming to us today from Soviet Russia and Germany—may it be said that such a literature is now on its way to realization? Yes, it is necessary to say so. Thus I think we must be very careful in the view we adopt towards proletarian literature; we must not forget that it can be only a *transitional* literature between the literature of bourgeois society and that of a classless society.

To the extent that it already exists, it is easy to *see* that proletarian literature is more the work of a milieu than of a man. It can only be, in fact, the emanation of a mass proletarian consciousness: I mean that it depends on the degree of general emancipation of the working class in a given country.

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EDITORIAL

Amnesty! Legalize undocumented now!

Working people everywhere should join with the more than a million people who have taken to the streets, from Los Angeles to Chicago and New York, to assert their rights and to say: Amnesty for all undocumented immigrants! Permanent residency now!

In response to the Sensenbrenner bill, passed by the House of Representatives, which would brand as a felon anyone living in the United States without all their papers in order, hundreds of thousands have proclaimed, "We are workers, not criminals." That response cuts right through the employers' divide-and-rule tactics. It underscores why supporting full immediate legal rights for all those living in the United States will strengthen the entire working class in our common fight against the bosses' assaults on our living standards, job conditions, wages, and rights.

The mass protests against anti-immigrant measures demonstrate the increased self-confidence of foreign-born workers, including many of the nearly 12 million who are undocumented. "We're here, we're not leaving, and if you kick us out we will return," millions say. This combative mood was particularly visible in Los Angeles, where between 500,000 and 1 million people poured into the streets in a sea of Mexican and other flags, and where tens of thousands of high school students walked out of classes despite school "lockdowns."

The unprecedented scope of these protests surprised the U.S. rulers and is having an impact on U.S. politics. The actions have spread and deepened divisions among the wealthy rulers over immigration policy and made it less likely that Congress will adopt any measure criminalizing the undocumented.

All the bills under debate by Democratic and Republican politicians are designed to serve the needs of the billionaire rulers at the expense of working people. Their purpose is not to drive foreign-born workers out of the United States but to push them down. From reinforcing the border cops to establishing a "guest worker" program, the aim of these measures is to maintain a pariah layer of the working class with fewer legal protections and subject to superexploitation by the employers.

The most effective answer to these attacks is to demand *immediate amnesty* for all immigrants without papers. All those residing in this country, whether born here or abroad, should be able to work and live free from discrimination, free from the threat of police harassment, arrest, and deportation. The undocumented should receive permanent resident status now, opening the way for them to obtain citizenship. No waiting periods, fines, or other onerous requirements. Getting a green card would give millions the right to live and work in the United States—undermining the bosses' ability to superexploit them—and to travel freely in and out of the country.

This demand should be advanced by the labor movement and others, along with pressing for unionizing all workers—native- and foreign-born, in building the ongoing mobilizations for immigrant rights, including the marches around the April 10 national day of action.

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Celebrate the Life and Political Contributions of Clifton DeBerry. Sat., April 29. Speakers: Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party; Young Socialists representative; Betsey Stone, organizer of the SWP branch in San Francisco; others. Dinner, 5:00 p.m.; program, 6:30 p.m. UFCW Local 101 Hall, 208 Miller Ave. For more information: (415) 584-2135.

NEW MEXICO

Farmington

The Second Annual Changing Woman Conference. April 23–24. Henderson Fine Arts Center, San Juan College. Pre-conference banquet $15, conference $15. 4601 College Boulevard. Sponsored by International Union of Operating Engineers Local 953, University of New Mexico School of Law, and the Center for Regional Studies. For more information contact IUOE at (505) 598-6634 or Rosie at (505) 598-0418.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Black Farmers March for Justice. April 26. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at 1400 Independence Ave. 12:00 noon march. Sponsored by the National Black Farmers Association, and Black Farmers and Agriculturalist Association. For more information contact John Boyd (804) 691-8528 or Gary Grant (252) 826-2800.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Washington's "Long War" and the Accelerating Transformation of the U.S. Military. Speaker: Paul Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 14. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 3029A Bessemer Rd. Tel.: (205) 780-0021.

FLORIDA

Miami

Puerto Rico: The Fight Against U.S. Colonialism. Speaker: Deborah Liatos, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 8365 NE 2nd Ave. #206. Tel. (305) 756-4436.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

U.S. Hands Off Cuba and Venezuela! Fri., April 14. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. 3557 S. Archer St. Tel.: (773) 890-1190.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

U.S. Hands Off Venezuela. Build May 20 Demonstration. Speaker: Olympia Newton, Young Socialists, recently returned from congress of the Youth of 5th Republic (JVR) held in Venezuela. Fri., April 14. Banquet for Militant Fund Drive, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. Donation: $5 dinner, $5 program. 307 W. 36th St., 10th floor (near 8th Ave., use north set of elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.

TEXAS

Houston

Defend the Gains of the Cuban Revolution—Lessons for Workers in the U.S. Speaker: Tom Leonard, Socialist Workers Party, retired merchant seaman. Fri., April 14. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: $5 dinner, $5 program. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. Tel.: (713)869-6550.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

U.S. Hands Off Cuba, Venezuela. Build May 20 Demonstration. Fri., April 14. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: $5 dinner, $5 program. 5418 Rainer Ave. South. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

CANADA

Toronto

Imperialist Hands off Venezuela! Speaker: Natalie Doucet, Young Socialists, participant at the congress of the Youth of the 5th Republic (JVR). Fri., April 14. Dinner 6:30 p.m., program 7:30 p.m. 2238 Dundas St. West, Suite 201. Tel.: (416) 535- 9140.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

The Struggle for Workers' Rights in the U.S. Fri., April 14, 7:00 p.m. Bildhuggarvägen 17 Johanneshov. Tel.: 08 31 69 33

LETTERS

New Orleans 'reconstruction'

I recently returned from New Orleans where I was involved in the cleanup of the flood-damaged houses. Here's the situation in brief: There is little infrastructure reconstruction occurring in the heavily damaged areas of New Orleans, which account for about half the city. The majority of public schools, community colleges, and large apartment buildings are water damaged and remain closed. I saw a shuttered general hospital, and shuttered firehouses. As of mid-February, at least 40 percent of the city area has no electricity or gas. Many neighborhoods are nearly vacant. Hundreds of neighborhood businesses have shut because of hurricane damage, or lost population. The levees remain vulnerable to an oncoming hurricane season.

Ben Roberts
San Francisco, California

'Playa Girón'

The lead article on the sports page of the March 7 *New York Times* is one in a series on the Cuban national team competing in the World Baseball Classic. Reporting from Havana, Jack Curry interviewed 21-year-old Cuban player Yuliesky Gourriel.

Gourriel, reports Curry, "flashed a copy of *Playa Girón*, a book about the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961." Curry did not identify the publisher. Pathfinder Press has published, in English and Spanish, the book *Playa Girón /Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas* by Fidel Castro and José Ramón Fernández.

Without suggesting he had read the book, Curry said it is "not light reading," adding, "but for Gourriel it is apparently required reading." Of more interest was Gourriel's reaction to the book. "It's very good," the Cuban player told the *Times.*

Geoff Mirelowitz
Seattle, Washington

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Puerto Rico

Continued from front page

Los Macheteros, in his home in western Puerto Rico.

FBI officials told the media they acted on an arrest warrant dated Aug. 20, 2004, on charges that he did not report to parole officers. Camacho has spent 15 years in U.S. prisons because of his pro-independence activities. He was one of the *independentistas* convicted on frame-up charges in connection with a 1983 robbery of a Wells Fargo depot in Hartford, Connecticut. Camacho had previously been freed on parole in 1997, 2001, and 2004, and rearrested each time for failing to meet the onerous parole conditions.

In his statement, Camacho reiterated that he does not recognize Washington's authority over Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony. "The federal court is not in Puerto Rico to dispense justice, but to hijack the sovereignty of the Puerto Rican people and advance the imperialist, expansionist policies of the United States. What is good for the hunter is not good for the hare," he said.

The FBI timed the arrest to try to undercut the decolonization conference, "which has been well-received by all anticolonial sectors," Camacho said.

Organizers of the March 28–30 decolonization congress held a press conference after Camacho's arrest to demand his release and oppose the FBI's assaults on the independence movement.

The conference, which drew a few hundred people over the three days, called for a series of activities over the coming months, including an educational campaign on the fight to end U.S. colonial rule, a national march calling for the decolonization of Puerto Rico, and a Second Congress for Decolonization, projected to take place in New York. A delegation from the National Council for Decolonization will join other pro-independence forces in testifying at the June 12 hearings of the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization.

The day after Camacho's arrest, students organized a car caravan from the university to the Puerto Rican congressional building, with signs reading, "FBI out! Free Antonio Camacho!" They joined a march at the capitol called by the Hostos National Pro-Independence Movement (MINH) and others to protest a decision of the Puerto Rican House of Representatives to honor notorious right-wing Cuban businessman Julio Labatud, who has been linked to the 1979 assassination of Carlos Muñiz Varela. Muñiz Varela was a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, an organization founded by Cuban-born youth to promote support for the Cuban Revolution.

About 1,000 people turned out for the protest against Labatud. Among the speakers were Carlos Muñiz Pérez, son of Muñiz Varela, and Raúl Alzaga, a founding leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade. A close collaborator of Muñiz Varela, Alzaga has for years exposed the involvement of Puerto Rican cops and rightist Cuban exiles in Muñiz's assassination, and the FBI's complicity in its cover-up. Despite substantial evidence, the U.S. government has never prosecuted anyone for this crime.

Also speaking was Rosi Mari Pesquera, an independentista and sister of Santiago "Chagui" Mari Pesquera, whose 1976 murder has also been linked to rightist Cubans. Pro-independence forces have used the 30th anniversary of his death to step up their campaign for justice in his case.

The big-business press here has sought to tar the rally as a "riot," as a banner headline in the March 30 *El Nuevo Día* put it. They have seized on an incident in which a few demonstrators entered the congressional building and broke windows inside. So far, two people have been charged for the incident.

Since the killing of Ojeda Ríos in September, the FBI has carried out further high-profile attacks on the independence movement, sparking protests and fueling the widespread hatred for the federal cops here. On February 10, heavily armed FBI agents raided the homes of half a dozen independentistas across the island. They carted off computers, files, and other personal items. In the Río Piedras area of San Juan, residents reacted angrily at the agents, who also pepper-sprayed reporters. FBI officials claim the raids were designed to thwart a "domestic terrorist attack" planned by independence activists.

In response, more than 1,000 people, carrying a giant Puerto Rican flag, marched down a major San Juan avenue chanting, "FBI get out" and "Respect Puerto Rico."

Meanwhile, the government of Puerto Rico has gone to federal court accusing the U.S. Justice Department of obstructing a local investigation of the FBI killing of Ojeda Ríos.